

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

By this paper, claims 1 and 21 have been amended and new claims 26-31 have been added. Claims 1-31 remain pending.

In the outstanding Office action dated May 7, 2003, claims 1, 2-5, 21 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Chuter (6,454,795). Claims 3, 4, 7-20, 22, 23 and 25 were withdrawn from consideration. Independent claim 21 has been amended to positively recite opposed contact surfaces which when brought together by collapsing an endoprosthesis, isolate ends of longitudinal members of the endoprosthesis from stress due to forces associated with collapsing the endoprosthesis. Similarly, claim 21 has been amended to recite a plurality of curved longitudinal members being curved such that upon collapsing an endoprosthesis, portions of the curved longitudinal members removed from proximal and distal ends thereof, come into contact to thereby isolate the proximal and distal ends from stresses associated with collapsing the endoprosthesis. Such structure is clearly shown in FIGS. 16-17 of the present application. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the cited Chuter reference does not disclose or teach such structure and further, does not contemplate isolating portions of an endoprosthesis from stresses during collapse of the endoprosthesis. As such, it is believed that independent claims 1 and 21 as well as the claims depending therefrom define patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has attempted to completely respond to the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office action. In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant

respectfully requests that the application be reconsidered, the claims allowed and the application passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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